Title: Need to give financial assistance to State Government of Kerala to improve the lot of Khadi weavers in the State.- Laid.

*SHRI T. GOVINDAN (KASARGOD): I would like to draw the attention of the Central Government to the crisis faced by the Khadi weaving industry. The gravity of the rural unemployment has forced lakhs of rural poor, especially their womenfolk, to engage themselves in the Khadi weaving sector. Of late, owing to multifarious reasons, production cost has come up and in turn marred the sale of khadi products.

Today, the khadi weavers get only Rs.15 to Rs.25 as their daily wages, which in fact is much lower than the wages available in the handloom sector. Because of this, khadi weavers are compelled to shift to handloom sector. This drain is from those who had their expert training under the Khadi Board. Providing reasonable and adequate wages is the only way to make them continue in the khadi sector. But, when you increase the wages, it should not affect the production costs and in turn, the quantum of sales. hence, to solve such an impending crisis, some sort of incentive should be introduced in this sector. Moreover, that should be in the form of a grant. To facilitate such a programme and to give 10 per cent wage hike as incentive to the workers, the Government of Kerala have requested the Central Government for Rs.18 lakh for one year. I request that speedy action may be taken to sanction the said amount to the State of Kerala.

*(Laid on the table of the House)